



Department of Justice

STATEMENT

OF

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BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

CONCERNING

**"THE NEED TO KNOW: INFORMATION SHARING LESSONS
FOR DISASTER RESPONSE"**

PRESENTED ON

MARCH 30, 2006

Good afternoon and thank you, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, for the invitation to speak to you today. I am the Chief Information Officer for the Department of Justice. I am proud to discuss the accomplishments the Department has made in the area of information sharing as I approach my four-year anniversary with the Department.

The Department is committed to helping improve the ability of law enforcement personnel and homeland security first responders to share national security information. This may include classified intelligence reports, criminal history records or traffic stops. The key to all of this is *data*, helping over 180,000 law enforcement personnel follow standards so that they can safely and securely share photos, field reports or evidence with a fellow officer. The Department has several ongoing programs that are designed to address particular aspects of the information sharing challenge. These include the National Data Exchange (N-DEx), Next Generation Identification (NGI) System and Regional Data Exchange (R-DEx). However today, I am focusing on our umbrella program, the Law Enforcement Information Sharing Program (LEISP). This program includes how Federal agencies share with each other, how internal Department components share with each other (*i.e.*, DEA to ATF), and most importantly, Federal sharing to local Law Enforcement (LE) agencies and officers.

The LEISP strategy is the result of a collaborative process involving senior leadership from the Department's component agencies and representatives from across the national law enforcement community. LEISP is a program, not an information "system." It addresses barriers to information sharing and creates a forum for

collaboration on how existing and planned systems will be coordinated and unified for information sharing purposes. LEISP delineates guiding principles, a policy framework and functional requirements that are necessary to facilitate multi-jurisdictional law enforcement information sharing. LEISP establishes the Department's commitment to move from a culture of "need to know" toward a culture of "need to share" in which information is shared as a matter of standard operating procedure.

DOJ/DHS/DOD Inter-Operability

With our partners at DHS and the Department of Defense, we are also making great strides in sharing fingerprints across boundaries. What we refer to as the Inter-Operability program is showing great returns as fingerprints captured in theater in Iraq are being sent to the FBI in West Virginia for comparison and coordination. DHS (under the US VISIT program) has access to this data as well, and all three agencies are working on new standards to make this sharing even more efficient and timely.

Integrated Wireless Network (IWN)

I also want to mention the progress we have made on the Integrated Wireless Network (IWN) program. IWN is a partnership between the Department of Justice, the Department of Homeland Security and the Treasury Department to implement a consolidated nationwide communications system for federal law enforcement and homeland defense agents and officers. IWN will support approximately 80,000 Federal agents in all 50 States and the U.S. territories.

I testified to the House Committee on Commerce and Energy, Subcommittee on Telecommunications and the Internet in September of last year on the IWN program

and we continue to move forward with the effort. We are nearly complete with the procurement and an award is expected soon.

US Marshals Service and Sex Offender Website Success Stories

As this Committee is analyzing post-Katrina issues, I thought it was appropriate to mention two successes we had in the time immediately following the hurricane. As the Marshals Service moved prisoners from the New Orleans area, they faced the challenge of coordinating buses and new prison space. To complicate matters, the prisoners switched arm bands in hopes of confusing their guards. The Marshals used online photos and other descriptive data (scars, marks and tattoos) to ensure that valid identities were maintained. Another success was the use of the National Sex Offender Public Registry (www.nsopr.gov). This website was invaluable to local law enforcement as it helped cities like Houston and Baton Rouge identify known offenders who had evacuated to their city. While this website was limited to one type of criminal, we see this as a model for some of our other systems under development.

The Foundation is in Place

Law enforcement agencies have been collecting and sharing information for decades. To support law enforcement needs, the Department and other law enforcement agencies have been providing actionable information that supports the mission and objectives of law enforcement agencies at all levels, by providing a variety of information sharing programs. The most far reaching effort is the Global Information Sharing Initiative (Global)¹. Another example is the FBI's Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS), which provides law enforcement information relating to criminal histories, uniform crime reporting and fingerprint identification to meet the needs of

¹ Please see http://it.ojp.gov/topic.jsp?topic_id=8 for more information on Global.

Federal, State, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies. The State and local data providers and system users share responsibility for the operation and management of CJIS with the FBI through the CJIS Advisory Policy Board (CJIS APB). This shared management approach has provided the blueprint for the beginning of one of the most important prerequisites of successful information sharing: a federation of trust among all parties in the information sharing community.

Significant progress has been made to extend information sharing capabilities to a broader segment of the law enforcement community, and to begin connecting those disparate capabilities together. Far-reaching programs led by many agencies in the federal government have brought law enforcement partners at all levels together to address information sharing policy issues and develop standards such as the Global Justice XML (Extensible Markup Language) Data Model (GJXDM). These standards are developed in a public/private model with the help of non-profits and Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs). Groups such as Global are important for setting, communicating and maintaining national standards.

Challenges

The U.S. Constitution established a system of federalism, by which the responsibility for governing is divided between the national and the States' governments. However, it also means that law enforcement is organized into over 18,000 separate State, local, and tribal jurisdictions, with independent governance, information systems, and activities. The multiplicity of jurisdictions and their autonomous nature engender inconsistent policies, practices, and systems, and make coordination among agencies difficult. This also means that no one entity can mandate

coordination across all agencies. We have found that in some instances like Southern California and the New York metropolitan area, the locals are ahead of the Federal agencies. However, they are still looking to the Federal government for standards, in order to expand the reach of their programs to neighboring jurisdictions. As we begin designing N-DEx, we also are looking to the private sector for tools and techniques for ingesting and indexing large data sets on an on-going basis. At the same time, we need to find ways to improve the quality of the data and protect the privacy rights of US citizens.

The Departments of Justice and Homeland Security have launched several specific IT projects to improve information sharing, including the effort to connect the Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN), Law Enforcement Online (LEO), Regional Information Sharing Systems Network (RISSNET), and the Criminal Intelligence Sharing Alliance Network (CISAnet). Finally, working with partners from other Federal, state, local and tribal agencies, as well as private industry, the Department has developed initial versions of information sharing technology standards for inter-system query and retrieval and for database inter-operability standards.

The Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (IRTPA) and the President's Executive Order 13388 set out new requirements, mandates, and provisions for creation of an "Information Sharing Environment" (ISE), which will support the sharing of information among multiple communities, including law enforcement, intelligence, military, homeland security, diplomatic, State and local, and the private sector. I am personally involved with the ISE development on a weekly basis and many

Justice Department employees are providing valuable input to the Program Manager responsible for the development of the ISE.

The widespread availability and use of web services technologies will also help mitigate the information sharing standards issue over time. The Department has been working diligently with other local, State, tribal and Federal law enforcement partners, and with the private sector, to develop these types of standards. An example is the National Information Exchange Model (NIEM). I encourage Committee members and staff to visit www.niem.gov for more information on this joint DOJ/DHS program. The Federal Government can help promulgate these standards through incentives such as grant programs and targeted technical assistance. We are working with our DHS partners to encourage other agencies to adopt NIEM as a common data vocabulary for their inter-connected systems.

Conclusion

In closing, I want this committee to understand that information is being shared at the local/regional level. The Department of Justice, in partnership with many Federal agencies, is attempting to make this more common, more secure and more accessible to our customers across the United States. I encourage you and your staff to read our October 2005 document on LEISP, which provides even more detail on the vision for this program. We have many efforts underway that are validating our approach and pushing new concepts, so that law enforcement personnel no longer need to think about sharing, but rather it comes naturally and they share as a matter of practice.

Thank you for your time this afternoon. I will be happy to answer any questions you have.